

## Team MDOT: Getting Down to Business

As MDOT's new director, Gloria Jeff returns to the agency where she worked for 12 years. With this interview, she gives us a glimpse into her vision for MDOT.

**Q.** Although many people know you worked for both MDOT and FHWA in the past, the details are sketchy for most. What were your roles and responsibilities with each agency?

**A.** I began with MDOT as the division administrator of Multi-Regional Planning Division in 1981. From there I worked my way through the ranks as division administrator of Urban Transportation Planning Division, the assistant deputy director of Planning, and eventually became deputy director of Planning in 1988, where I remained until 1993.

After 12 years with MDOT, I took a job with the Federal Highway Administration as the associate administrator for Policy. I served as the acting federal highway administrator for a brief period and ended my tenure with FHWA as the deputy federal highway administrator. Most recently, I was manager of Transportation Programs for the Atlantic District of Parsons Brinkerhoff and served as a vice president with Parsons Brinkerhoff Quade & Douglas.

**Q.** Now that we know where you've been, where would you like to take MDOT? What direction do you see the department taking?

**A.** I am committed to leading Team MDOT in providing the citizens, businesses, residents of and visitors to Michigan with the best investments their tax dollars can buy. Here are my top three priorities: bringing more transportation dollars back to Michigan, preserving our existing transportation investments, and establishing and nurturing partnerships with all agencies we interact with.

We will lead by example...leading the way to a better transportation system for everyone.

**Q.** What goals do you want to achieve in your first year as MDOT director?

**A.** I have simple goals – not all are easy, but they are simple. Gov. Granholm and I are both committed to “Fix it First, Fix it Right.” We will protect what we already have, before building more to protect. Any homeowner knows that although a new sunroom would be great, it's not a good idea to build that before fixing the broken plumbing in the bathroom. That's not to say we'll never build anything new, but the focus will be on preservation rather than expansion.

Other goals include developing a warranty provision for projects that all parties can work within, and obtaining Michigan's fair share of federal funds. As most know, we are a donor state, and it's time to do everything possible to bring Michigan motorists what they deserve – a better return on federal dollars.

**Q.** Any final thoughts for the employees of MDOT?

**A.** We are a team. I am dedicated to better serving the citizens of Michigan, but that starts with working together to accomplish a common goal. In the spirit of The Three Musketeers: “All for one, one for all.” Team MDOT, let's get down to business! 🦋



Director Jeff, a career highway engineer and transportation specialist, was confirmed by the Senate in late February.

Gloria Jeff returns to MDOT as the first woman to run the department.

*Gloria J. Jeff*



Team MDOT:  
Getting Down to Business

MDOT Up Close  
Financial Operations

Success Seekers

Good News

Woodward Avenue

Staying Ahead of the Storm

MDOT Family Tree

OHR Update  
OHR's New Look

Title VI

I-94 Crash

#### State Transportation Commission

Ted B. Wahby, Chairman  
Betty Jean Awrey, Vice Chairwoman  
Lowell B. Jackson  
John W. Garside  
C. Robert Baillod  
Robert G. Bender

## Financial Operations Up Close

If you've ever asked for travel reimbursement, needed funds obligated to a highway project or had an MDOT bill to pay, most likely you needed the services and expertise of the Financial Operations Division.

### Who We Are and What We Do

Much like a family that manages a checkbook, Financial Operations controls the purse strings of the department, managing expenditures of nearly three billion dollars annually. The employees of FOD also bill and collect millions of dollars involving 51 different types of receivables. There are more than 300 "checkbooks" to maintain, including federal accounts, state trunkline accounts, comprehensive transportation, aeronautics, gas tax, bond money, trust fund money...and more!

"We are responsible for the department's budget and overall financial position, providing technical advice and reports to MDOT staff. We also manage the department's debt service," said Ed Timpf, Financial Operations administrator.

"We're the financial planners – we partner with regions, bureaus and offices to generate information for executive staff and the legislature," he said. "We also work extensively with legislative committees and Governmental Affairs to craft and pass MDOT's annual appropriations bill."

***It's 1,000 times easier doing it right, than to try and fix it afterward.***

"We're here to help regarding financial questions," Ed said. "Unfortunately, Financial Operations is sometimes viewed as 'The Regulator.' I'd like to change that image. We're the place to call to find out how to do it right. No matter what the question – the limit on what you can pay for a group lunch or how to buy airline tickets – we can help. It's 1,000 times easier doing it right, than to try and fix it afterward."

Financial Operations Division is comprised of three areas: Project Accounting and Stores; Payables and Accounts Receivable Section; and Reports and Analysis Section.

The Project Accounting staff is well known throughout the state. They are responsible for all funding obligation, cost accounting and billing activity related to MDOT's federal, state and locally funded projects. The staff is involved with every aspect of the project's financial life. They facilitate approval and obligate all funds, control the cost accounting and billing systems, then complete the project accounting for every job.

"Our goal is to partner with virtually everyone!" said Bill Ragla, section manager. "We work with project managers, TSC staff, engineers, planners, federal agencies and local units of government to provide the best customer service and optimize our available financial resources."

"We also maintain the 'stores' inventory system that includes department assets to cover emergency needs. We're replacing our electronic system with the new, improved MAINSTAR system that will be up and running by May 2003. It will service approximately 100 stores locations throughout the state," Bill said.

Reports and Analysis staff develops and monitors the department's \$3 billion budget, monitors the financial activities, closes the books and distributes over \$850 million of revenue to the counties, cities and villages.

"Very often, the staff is asked to change year-end processes, reduce budgets and provide accounting assistance," said Ann Dennis, section manager. "Through innovative solutions and interaction with all parties involved, our staff works hard to complete acceptable resolutions."

The Payables and Accounts Receivable Section processes all invoices, travel vouchers and procurement. Remarkably, they process about 13,000 travel vouchers and about 33,000 invoices annually. Five to 10 percent of travel vouchers require follow-up work. The most common errors include: missing forms, missing signatures, and contact names not filled in.

This section also prepares and collects approximately 12,000 bills each year. "Our section is very customer-oriented. We want to make sure our customers are paid on-time and correctly the first time! Every employee strives to meet this goal," said Chris Mergener, section manager.

### Biggest Challenges

For the 60 employees of the division, it's a big challenge to manage the financial resources of our multi-billion-dollar company. They are constantly looking at ways to manage the money better.

A new Web-based, less paper-based system may become the hallmark for a statewide system of travel vouchers. MDOT is slated to be the first state agency to demo the system this spring. The system uses technology to create speedier service.

One of the biggest challenges of the division lies in developing and implementing a new, electronic Project Accounting and Billing system. The PAB is the

largest IT project in the department. The system will replace the over 30-year-old, antiquated mainframe project accounting and billing system used to account for our \$1.3 billion annual transportation program. The system includes accounting for highways, aeronautics and public transportation projects.

"PAB will improve customer service by providing more accurate and timely project costs, and participant funding information," said Bill Ragla.

Another huge challenge is the incredible time crunch during budget preparation and the process of closing the fiscal year books. To complicate matters further, the State of Michigan closed its financial record books three months earlier than before in fiscal year 2002. To meet the accelerated year-end deadlines, MDOT had to revisit its entire process.

"Financial Operations Division staff went to the regions and Lansing staff to provide training," said Ann Dennis. "Some areas in MDOT had to drastically change the schedule they used to follow for year-end closing. It was a huge team effort – and because everyone worked so hard and worked together – we were successful in meeting the deadlines."

Continued on page 4

Financial Operations Division staff, with help from Administrator Ed Timpf, cuts the red tape of state government.

## Financial Operations Division At Your Service

### Aeronautics Accounting

Krista Walton ..... 517-335-2372

### Budget, liaison to DMB

Dennis Whiteherse ..... 517-373-0417

### Cashier

Mary Eleanor Tanghe ..... 517-373-1506

### Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, financial analysis assistance

Jodi Kukla ..... 517-335-2398

### CTF Accounting

Pat Hibbard ..... 517-335-5306

### Direct Vouchers

Sandy Garland ..... 517-373-1503

### Fixed Assets

Todd Quiring ..... 517-335-2380

### Highway Project Initiation

Linda Jackson ..... 517-335-2367

### MAIN security

Sherry Spedoske ..... 517-335-2395

### MFOS

Joanie DeWitt ..... 517-373-7846

### Procurement Cards

Merrilee Territo ..... 517-373-1523

### Project Accounting Unit Supervisor

Kay McNeal ..... 517-335-2366

### Project Coding Assistance

Lynn Nachazel ..... 517-373-1517

Bonnie Gates ..... 517-335-2389

### Receivable Issues

Helen Flower ..... 517-335-2386

### Travel Vouchers

Jerome White ..... 517-335-2503

### Stores Inventory Control

Juanita Thornton ..... 517-322-1008

### Warehouse Supervisor

Gene Pline ..... 517-322-5559





## Successes

The difficulties of dealing with accelerated year-end deadlines have created smarter business practices.

“We have developed new methods to strengthen the budget process,” Ann said. “We created a Financial Network and an Outreach Program. The Financial Network is an advisory group to Financial Operations that promotes better understanding of financial reporting and budget processes, problem-solving and financial analysis. It’s a resource group to share ideas, lessons learned and best practices.” The group met for the first time in February.

Both the Network and the Outreach Program are led by Brenda Chapman. Brenda has traveled to all seven regions, all TSCs and some special services units and garages – wherever financial activities are initiated.

“We’re looking for common problems that FOD can help resolve. I’m also reviewing policy and procedure issues and sharing best practices learned from other offices at the Outreach Program,” Brenda said.

The division also cites the development and implementation of MAP Financial Obligation System as one of the division’s biggest successes. The system, developed in partnership with FHWA in Lansing, authorizes project funding and obligating funds electronically.

“Michigan was the first – and perhaps is still the only – state to have this totally seamless system of requesting funding and obtaining approval from the FHWA,” said Bill Ragla. “The system enables us to activate funding on a project within hours, as opposed to the previous paper system that took days, and even weeks, to process. This system, and the technology it uses, is the foundation for the new Project Accounting and Billing System.”

More than 500 locations at MDOT now pay their utility bills through e-invoice. This saves countless hours of staff time entering details for direct vouchers.



The Stores Control unit processes highway emergency needs such as posts, guardrails and signs.



Travel Audit employees process all travel vouchers for MDOT employees.

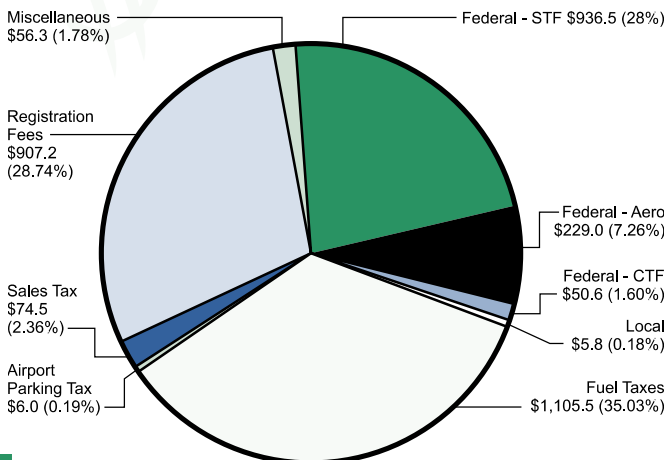
Ed Timpf cites technology and strong staff support as the keys to success.

“We’re excited to teach what we know to help improve every financial process in the department. There’s a lot of pressure to get the jobs out the door and we are here to help,” he concluded. 🙌

## Where the Money Comes From

Estimated Revenue for 2003 (in millions)

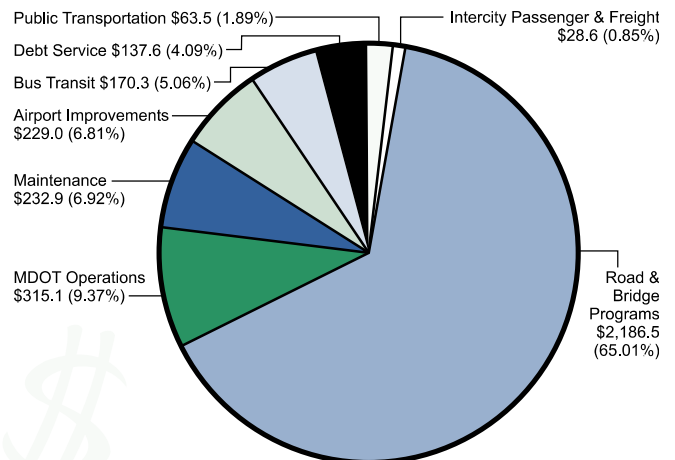
**\$3,371.4 TOTAL**



## Where the Money Goes

Expenditures for 2003 (in millions)

**\$3,363.5 TOTAL**



# MDOT's Newest Recognition Program Requires Thinking Outside the Box

Who is a Success Seeker? You may be! If you take an opportunity to be innovative or think outside the box, you may be eligible to apply for Success Seekers, MDOT's newest recognition program that supports employee excellence.

"In the last five to seven years, we've encouraged people to take risks...to do things a better way; to think outside the box," said Larry Tibbits, chief operations engineer. "Success Seekers provides a means to share your ideas and experience throughout the department to help others learn and share the benefits."

The criteria for the program are:

- Action must be self-initiated or suggested by supervisor or others.
- It must be a recognized effort.
- It must be different, new or innovative.
- The outcome involves a "lesson learned."

For more information about the program, read about it on the Performance Excellence Division's Web site on *The Interchange*.

## Meet Three MDOT Success Seekers

Marshall TSC manager Paul Steinman is a Success Seeker. Paul was faced with a serious problem in January 2001, when the Presque Isle County Road Commission, the contract maintenance agency, informed Paul they would not renew their maintenance contract with MDOT. Faced with a serious problem, and with winter just a short 10 months away, Paul started to brainstorm to come up with possible solutions.

The obvious choice was to establish MDOT maintenance facilities in Presque Isle, but the costs were prohibitive. Since the obvious was not the solution, he looked for something less conventional.

He put together a team of key department people to assist. After a year of hard work, a state maintenance contract was hammered out with Presque Isle County. The highlight of the contract is that it combines the best practices from the current construction contracting

process with the simplicity and flexibility of the current state maintenance contract.

## On the other end of the state...

Bob Brenner, Electronic Services Unit, and Mike Walimaki, Asset Management Division, wanted to try a new technology that might provide a better way to determine travel characteristics for urban/suburban roads. They installed a low-speed vehicle classification detector on M-53, north of 18 Mile Road in Sterling Heights. The new technology can remember how many vehicles axles are detected. This technology could help MDOT gather vehicle classifications in locations that were previously done manually.

"Other state agencies have had mixed results with this technology," said Bob. "We decided the best way to determine the usefulness of the technology was to install it and monitor the system ourselves. We need to see if actual results live up to the promises. All new technology has to be tested and scrutinized before being accepted."

Recognizing that the innovative, somewhat controversial system may have flaws, the team decided to try it on Michigan roads to understand its limitations.

"If it works, it should enhance our collection and analysis efforts in asset management," said Bob. "It's not a cure-all, but it could be another tool." 🛠️

Mike Walimaki (left) and Bob Brenner evaluate new low-speed vehicle detectors on M-53.



## Suggestions for Producing Positive Change

— contributed by Paul Steinman

1. Start the process assuming that everything can be changed. As you proceed, you will learn what should be saved and what can be discarded.
2. Always challenge the norms. As you work through the process, you will make new ones.
3. Give all ideas merit. Some of this team's best ideas were spinoffs of our original brainstorming session.
4. Realize that most problems are more complex than we initially perceive.
5. Always consider the statewide perspective. The changes you make can be precedent setting.
6. Finally, and most importantly, be patient. There will be resistance to change. If you believe in what you are doing, stay the course.



### Chilling out in Southwest Region

Southwest Region is battling Mother Nature's winter season once again with the expansion of the anti-icing program that began in 1999. This year, the region has expanded its program to include all freeways in the region (I-196, I-69, I-94 and US-131), with the exception of US-12.



Southwest Region's anti-icing program battles winter roads.

The anti-icing material, which is a 50:50 mixture of an agricultural by-product and a 30 percent solution of magnesium chloride, works by reducing the freezing temperature of water. This slows the formation of ice on the surface of the roadway and allows for easier snow removal.

Kevin Jach, a maintenance worker from the Kal-amazoo Garage, has been driving an anti-icing truck since the beginning of the program. "There's very little difference between driving a plow truck and an anti-icing truck," Jach said. "The only difference is that the anti-icing material cannot be applied during a storm; the roads are clear and it is not snowing when we apply the material."

Jach said he has noticed a difference on the roadways since the program began. "It is definitely beneficial," he said. "It gives us more time to get out there on the roads with our plow trucks."

Bigger and better: the new Metro Region office is located right next to the old building.

### Metro Region office moves next door

Just days before the November holiday, there was a Thanksgiving parade-of-sorts that no member of the Metro Region staff will soon forget. Metro Region employees, armed with endless boxes and supplies, made the 50-foot-trek from the old region office to their new \$4 million facility.

The brand-new Metro Region office, which sits next to the old building, is a 24,000 square foot, two-story facility. So, although the building moved, the address – and all other contact information – stays the same. The new office building features numerous conference rooms, a spacious lobby and adequate space for employees. Many issues were addressed during the design and construction, resulting in a state-of-the-art heating and cooling system, proper lighting, and sufficient parking.

Prior to designing the new building, a study determined that taxpayers would save over \$400,000 by building a new facility rather than renovating the existing building. The larger building allows

the Metro Real Estate Division to join their region colleagues in Southfield, eliminating the need for a satellite office in Sterling Heights.

"We're confident the new building will result in a more efficient MDOT and improved employee morale," said Metro Region Deputy Engineer Greg Johnson. "That's the major benefit to the taxpayers of our state."

Currently, the old facility is being prepped for demolition, scheduled to begin in June. Once the building is razed, construction of a visitor parking lot will begin.

"One of our primary goals is to make MDOT more user friendly for the general public," Johnson said. "The creation of Metro's Transportation Service Centers was the first step, followed closely by the construction of this new building."

An open house may be planned in the future.

Metro Region employees wave from their spacious new lobby.







## Aviation conference features Tuskegee Airman and first female astronaut

Launching the Centennial year of the birth of powered flight, the 2003 Great Lakes International Aviation Conference was a must for anyone looking for outstanding educational sessions, trade displays and lively interaction with a diverse audience. The three-day conference was held on the MSU campus and drew about 1,000 participants from six states and Ontario, including pilots, technicians, students, teachers and industry representatives.

Among the speakers was Lt. Col. Lee Archer, a well-known dignitary in the world of aviation. He was a member of the famed Tuskegee Airmen in World War II, flying 169 combat missions and earning the coveted Ace award. The Tuskegee Airmen were America's first black military flying unit the U.S. Army Air Corps. Their story was made into an HBO movie that aired in 1995.

Another featured speaker was Bernice ("B") Steadman, one of the original Mercury 13 female astronauts. In 1961, she was selected as one of the original 25 women pilots to be tested for participation in the space program. B co-founded the International Women's Air and Space Museum, and served as president of the International Ninety Nines – the largest organization of women pilots in the world.

"We read in history books about the Tuskegee Airmen and the Black Sheep Squadron," said Conference Planning Committee Chairman Phil Tartalone. "It was fascinating talking to them and listening to their stories and an honor to have them as our guests."

In addition to Tartalone, the planning committee included representatives from the FAA, Western Michigan University and Jackson Community College. Brian Whitfield, MDOT Graphics unit, created the promotional materials; and Stephanie Litaker, Office of Communications, handled public relations.

## Handprint tree is special thank-you to Mt. Pleasant employee

Wayne Switalski, transportation maintenance worker in the Mt. Pleasant Maintenance Garage, received a unique thank-you from school kids in the area. Wayne was responsible for making improvements to an access road from the highway to the children's subdivision. Apparently, the road was so bumpy that the kids were tossed around in the bus on their way to and from school. After Wayne was done with the road, no more bumps and no more complaints – just smiles! To show their appreciation, the children sent this unique thank-you "tree" to Wayne, a 30-year-plus MDOT employee.



Handprint tree was a thank-you from grateful school children to Wayne Switalski.

## A birthday hat a la MDOT

Art Morales, transportation maintenance worker in the Grand Ledge Maintenance Facility, was treated to a special present from his family on his 50th birthday. It was unique, but once this photo is published, it may become a common present. Art's family wanted to recognize his birthday and 28 years at MDOT with specially decorated construction cone headgear. We don't think it's approved for work zone use, but it's perfect for your special day. Hat's off to you, Art!

Art Morales models his special birthday hat.



COURTESY OF PETE BENDEL

### WORTH repeating

*"Day by day, nothing seems to change, but pretty soon, everything is different."*

– Calvin and Hobbes

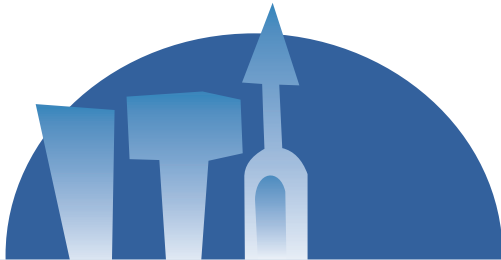
# Woodward Avenue: a Road to the Heart and Soul of America

On June 13, 2002, Woodward Avenue (M-1) – from the Detroit River to the city of Pontiac – became one of America's 99 National Byways, and the only urban route so designated.

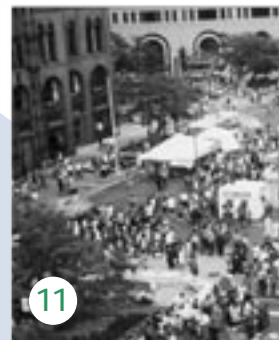
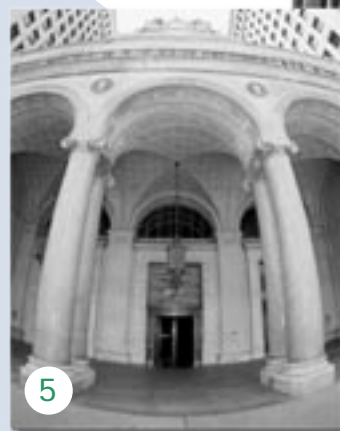
As former U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta noted in his announcement, "...Byways are roads to the heart and soul of America. They create a sense of pride and connect us to the nation's history and culture. Woodward Avenue put the world on wheels, and America's automobile heritage is represented along this corridor."

Welcome to Detroit's main drag...Woodward Avenue. Stretching out from the base of Detroit at the Detroit River, Woodward follows the pathway of growth from the heart of the city. Lined with history, cultural institutions and beautiful architecture, Woodward Avenue travels through downtown Detroit, past the Detroit Zoo, the Cranbrook Educational Community in Bloomfield Hills, and on to the city of Pontiac. Nearly every mile of this byway includes historical sites that have shaped the industrial life of our nation.

Hop in the car and enjoy the sights while you cruise down Woodward Avenue!



1. Royal Oak's Shrine of the Little Flower Church
2. Pontiac's Commercial Historic District
3. Ferndale's Magic Bag Theater
4. The Woodward Dream Cruise  
COURTESY OF THE WOODWARD DREAM CRUISE, INC.
5. General Motors Building in Detroit
6. Fisher Theater/New Center
7. Detroit Zoo and Water Tower
8. Palmer Park in Detroit
9. Museum of African American History
10. Detroit Institute of Arts
11. Comerica Tastefest crowd  
COURTESY OF NEW CENTER COUNCIL, INC.
12. America's Thanksgiving Parade on Woodward  
(second largest in the nation)  
COURTESY OF THE PARADE COMPANY
13. City of Detroit Municipal Building and the "Spirit of Detroit"





## A Brief History

Long before Detroit was incorporated as a city in 1815, Woodward Avenue was established as a primary transportation path by Native Americans. It was known as the Saginaw Trail and later became a wood planked "corduroy road" for wagon travel. In the 1820s, Woodward included toll booths, and a road composed of gravel, mud and cedar blocks. In 1909, the first mile of concrete highway in the world was built between Six and Seven Mile roads by Wayne County. In 1916, the 27-mile length to Pontiac was paved, and in 1919 the nation's first three-color traffic light appeared on the thoroughfare.

The auto industry grew up along Woodward. Henry Ford built his first car at his home there, just four blocks west of Woodward. The Model T was built in 1910 in Highland Park. Chrysler was founded three blocks east of Woodward, and GM introduced its new Pontiac line and GMC truck and coach lines in 1926 in Pontiac.

"Woodwarding" became the craze in the 1950s and 1960s. Cruisers gathered at drive-in restaurants. Muscle car competition hit its heyday in the mid-1960s. The Woodward Dream Cruise, staged from Ferndale to Pontiac, is one of Metro Detroit's most exciting annual events. It attracts more than 1.5 million people from around the world and shows off 30,000 classic cars.

Woodward remains the spine of vitality in the Motor City. General Motors moved its headquarters to the Renaissance Center. Comerica Park, the new playing field for the Detroit Tigers, opened on Woodward. Compuware will soon open its headquarters in the new Campus Martius project. Interest in landmark buildings and historic preservation has polished some of Detroit's jewels including The Fox and Gem theaters.

(Information supplied by Woodward Heritage.)

## Woodward Heritage

## Quick Facts

Length: 27 miles

Time to allow for tour: at least five hours

Named for: Supreme Court Judge Augustus B. Woodward, an early leader in the city's history

Designations:

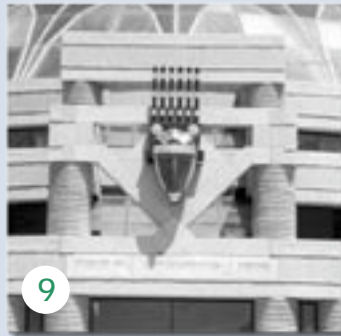
Designated as Automobile National Heritage Area by National Park Service (1998)

Designated as Michigan Heritage Route by MDOT (1999)

Designated as National Byway by FHWA (2002)

For more information about Woodward Avenue, visit [www.woodwardheritage.com](http://www.woodwardheritage.com) or [www.byways.org/](http://www.byways.org/).

MDOT staff involved in the Woodward Avenue designation as a National Byway: Pete Hanses, Heritage Route Program manager; Paul McAllister, Planning; Ernie Savas, Metro Region Engineer; Jeff Edwards, Metro Region Planning; Mike Eustice, Oakland TSC; Margaret Barondess, Planning; and Jose Lopez, Planning.



# Staying Ahead of the Storm

The following account was edited from an original article provided by Jim Hodge, Brighton Garage. Jim wrote this after a major storm hit during the winter of 2002.

It was a Tuesday in February at the Brighton Maintenance Garage. But it could have been any day, except for the impending snow.

## 3:30 a.m.

The midnight shift transportation maintenance workers keep a close watch on the weather and road conditions. Meteorologists on the cable TV weather channel have been tracking a winter storm as it moves in from the west. John Pietryzk, lead worker for the skeleton three-man night crew, will determine whether or not to call in day-crew workers early.

## 4:30 a.m.

Sources confirm that the western edge of the garage's 329 lane miles of freeways and state roads will be hit around the morning rush hour. John contacts day-shift workers to cover five of the garage's eight snow routes. He then climbs into a salt truck. John and his two fellow night crew workers will cover the three routes farthest to the west – the ones that will be first to feel the storm.

The primary objective in any snowstorm is the same for all of Michigan's 26 maintenance garages: Stay ahead of the storm. Every minute the storm is allowed to build unattended, contributes to an ever-increasing struggle to get the roads under control. In an effort to stay ahead of this storm, the crew spreads salt on the expressway ramps, curves, overpasses and any spots where experience has demonstrated that the wind will blow snow across the road.



Jim Hodge (left), Brighton Garage employee and author, poses with co-worker Bill Anderson, TMW.

## 6:00 a.m.

An hour before his normal start time, Rick Hursh arrives at work. The garage employees voted Rick in charge when the Brighton facility became a self-directed garage three years ago. With 34 years' experience at this facility, Rick knows every potential trouble spot in his territory. *(Editors' Note: Rick retired in summer 2002)*

Upon arrival, Rick sees that the five day-crew workers, who had been called in early, have already loaded their trucks with salt and headed to their assigned routes. For the time being, the Brighton Garage is ahead of the storm. By 6:15, snow begins to fall at the western edge of the garage's territory. By 6:45 it is snowing throughout the territory.

Each snow storm is different. How Rick and his crew deal with this storm will be determined by several factors including how much snow is predicted, the storm's expected duration, and consideration of the current and changing temperatures, wind velocity and direction, wetness of the snow, time of day when it hits, and whether or not rush hour traffic will be a factor.

If the storm is lengthy, Rick must take into consideration that he has limited staff. Only TMWs with commercial drivers' licenses can operate the big snow removal salt trucks. Also, state law mandates that no commercial driver can drive more than 12 hours without rest.



John Pietryzk is the crew's lead worker.

Knowing this, Rick splits his staff of 12-16 TMWs into three shifts, rotating them in order to maintain the staff required to keep the roads clear.

## 7:00 a.m.

The rest of the day crew arrives as the night crew departs. The storm remains steady throughout the morning. Each TMW works to distribute his salt load accurately throughout the length of his assigned route. Experience is definitely the best teacher for this job.

## 10:00 a.m.

The snow steadily continues. The men return to reload salt as necessary. The garage's two mechanics put aside long-term projects to address truck problems that might be encountered during the storm. Despite year-round care, equipment problems can arise, such as inoperable turn signals, flat tires, severed hydraulic lines or, a truck could break down on the road. When the garage is short on manpower, the mechanics must put aside their maintenance work to drive salt trucks.

### 1:00 p.m.

At last the snow lets up. Altogether, six and one-half inches have fallen. So much snow falling in such a relatively short time makes frustrating work for a TMW. By the time each driver completes his route and starts over again, the lanes he has worked are, at best, a slushy mess. TMWs are taught to keep pounding away...that the results will eventually become evident.

Rick looks to the weather forecast: falling temperatures for the rest of the day with two more inches of snow expected after midnight. The day crew continues to work the road surfaces, salting and blading in an effort to melt the snow and ice.

Because of the storm's intensity, Rick knows that the crew must take time to attend to the road shoulders and ramps. If the shoulder snow is not pushed back before the expected midnight snow hits,

it will create dangerously high snow banks. Rick also knows that rush-hour traffic will become a factor by 4 p.m.

### 3:30 p.m.

It's normal quitting time for the day-crew workers, but Rick sends home only the five men who were called in early. The rest continue to work with the afternoon shift.

### 5:00 p.m.

Although plenty of work remains, the roads are now manageable. Rick is satisfied with the situation and heads for home, leaving the storm in the hands of his afternoon shift boss, Doug Lynch.

John's three-man night crew is due at 10 p.m. Doug calls them in at 7 p.m. Upon their arrival, the day crew, who stayed over, head for home.

For the next few hours, all but two of the men remaining continue to clean up

the roads and shoulders. John directs the other two men to clean the snow out of the westbound rest area, one of two rest areas in the garage's care.

Although the afternoon crew is scheduled to go home at 10:30 p.m., no one will be leaving since the roads still require attention and more snow is expected. The snow starts again at 11:30 p.m. John directs the two TMWs who are plowing out the rest area to join the others on the snow routes. The garage is back on track, still striving to stay ahead of the storm.

### 2:00 a.m.

At last the snow sputters out, but the work is not done. Although the roads are in good shape, more work is needed on the shoulders and ramps. The men work throughout the night. John calls in four day-crew workers. As they arrive he sends home the afternoon shift who have worked 12 hours straight.

### 3:15 a.m.

It has been 21 hours since the garage took its initial stand against the storm. Rick arrives and learns the extended forecast does not include any new snow. He directs the crew to mount the front plow blades which are used on areas where the snow is too deep for the underbelly blades. The men go to work on these remaining areas.

The men conclude it's been another successful operation for the Brighton Garage with only minor equipment problems and no accidents or injuries. And, because the garage has stayed ahead of the storm, overtime pay has been kept to a minimum.

Once everything is under control the men work in teams, using high-pressure fire hoses, to clean up their trucks in preparation for the next storm. 🌨

Head Mechanic Ernie Bowman keeps the big salt trucks ready to roll.

Brighton Garage TMWs Jeff Jamrog (left) and Dan Sokol (center) and Maintenance worker Jim Hodge get ready to tackle what Old Man Winter blows their way.



### WORTH repeating

“Man's biggest mistake is to believe that he's working for someone else.”

— Nashua Cavalier



## MDOT family tree

We're pleased to bring you this *MDOT Today* column which includes news about changes in the MDOT family tree: new hires, appointments, promotions, retirements, and, sadly, deaths. This information is supplied by the Office of Human Resources for October, November and December 2002. (News about an employee's or retiree's passing is sent to us by various methods. Please contact staff if you have news of this type.) If you wish to include news about births or adoptions in your family, contact the *MDOT Today* staff or send any information via GroupWise to [MDOTToday@michigan.gov](mailto:MDOTToday@michigan.gov).

### New Hires

#### October 2002

**Dennis Adams**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Detroit TSC, Metro Region  
**Donald Crater**, accounting technician 7, Payments, Financial Operations, Lansing  
**Paul Gohs**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Saginaw Special Crews, Bay Region  
**Carmede Jackson**, accounting technician 7, Payments, Financial Operations, Lansing  
**Mark Knight**, transportation maintenance worker 8, Saginaw Eastside Garage, Bay Region  
**Richard Liptak**, state deputy division administrator 15, Administration, North Region  
**Robert Mayner**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Brighton Garage, University Region  
**Jeffrey McGinnis**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Special Crews, Bay Region  
**Ronald Melton**, bridge safety officer 6, Maintenance, Blue Water Bridge, Metro Region  
**Monica Miller**, bridge safety officer 6, Maintenance, Blue Water Bridge, Metro Region  
**Todd Musson**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Brighton Garage, University Region  
**Dan Post**, construction technician 8, Delivery, Construction, Grayling TSC, North Region  
**Russell Prevost**, survey technician 8, Project Development, North Region  
**Steven Solak**, survey technician 8, Project Development, Design, North Region  
**Timothy Storie**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Brighton Garage, University Region  
**Amy Willing**, department analyst 9, Contract Services, Lansing  
**Jeannie Worden**, general office assistant 5, Executive, University Region

#### November

**Russell Allen**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Saginaw Eastside Garage, Bay Region  
**John Babatunde**, engineering technician 11, Operations, Muskegon TSC, Grand Region  
**Ryan Begley**, storekeeper 7, Support Services  
**Catherine Bowers**, property analyst 9, Project Development, Real Estate, Metro Region  
**Kevin Brown**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Williamston Garage, University Region  
**Carl Caradonna**, master licensed electrician 10, Maintenance, Auburn Hills Garage, Metro Region  
**Sean Dennison**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Brighton Garage, University Region  
**David Deverman**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Charlotte Garage, University Region  
**Sharon Edgar**, state division administrator 17, Passenger Transportation, UPTRAN, Lansing

**Michael Fuhrman**, financial analyst 12, Administration, Grand Region

**Charles Gasper**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Saginaw Special Crews, Bay Region

**William Haney**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Williamston Garage, University Region

**Michael Hirschman**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Mt. Pleasant Garage, Bay Region

**Brent Hoppes**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Grand Ledge Garage, University Region

**Michael Horodeczny**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Adrian Garage, University Region

**Harold Inman II**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Auburn Hills Garage, Metro Region

**Ruben Johnivan**, engineering technician, Freight Services & Safety Division, UPTRAN, Lansing

**Shane Knight**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Saginaw Eastside Garage, Bay Region

**Gregory Krueger**, engineer manager licensed 15, Traffic & Safety, Metro Region

**Gerard Lacey**, property analyst 11, Real Estate, Metro Region

**Rochelle McFarlane**, state worker 4, Mackinac Bridge

**Richard McKeage**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Saginaw Eastside Garage, Bay Region

**Brett Moe**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Mt. Pleasant Garage, Bay Region

**Daniel Naegele**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Auburn Hills Garage, Metro Region

**Raymond Plaza**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Saginaw Eastside Garage, Bay Region

**Gene Pline**, storekeeper supervisor 9, Finance & Administration, Lansing

**James Price**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Charlotte Garage, University Region

**Lisa Price**, personnel management analyst 9, Office of Human Resources, Lansing

**Steve Raymond**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Saginaw Eastside Garage, Bay Region

**Thomas Remenecz**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Saginaw Eastside Garage, Bay Region

**Jonas Russel**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Mt. Pleasant Garage, Bay Region

**Sheldon Salvalaggio**, bridge worker 6, International Bridge

**Suzanne Seal**, executive secretary 10, Airports

**Mark Spitzley**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Grand Ledge Garage, University Region

**John Sutto**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Saginaw Westside Garage, Bay Region

**Margaret Szajner**, engineering technician 8, Design, Traverse City TSC, North Region

**Dennis Warren**, construction technician 8, Lansing TSC, University Region

**Leonard Werstein**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Adrian Garage, University Region

**Richard Wheeler**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Saginaw Eastside Garage, Bay Region

**Daniel Wisneski**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Saginaw Eastside Garage, Bay Region

**Maria Withers**, personnel management analyst 9, Office of Human Resources, Lansing

**Judit Wittbrodt**, transportation engineer 12, Development, Oakland TSC, Metro Region

#### December

**Jill Carothers**, secretary 8, Brighton TSC, University Region

**Shanti Franklin-Owens**, transportation engineer 9, Grand Rapids TSC, Grand Region

**Donald Hoffman**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Brighton Garage, University Region

**Jeffery Jamrog**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Brighton Garage, University Region

**William Perod**, department analyst 12, Office of Communications, Lansing

**Dean Peterson**, department analyst 12, Transportation Services, Passenger Transportation Division, UPTRAN, Lansing

**Jeffrey Reed**, transportation maintenance worker 6, Saginaw West Side Garage, Bay Region

**Brian Rickwalt**, engineer technician 8, Construction, Cass City TSC, Bay Region

**Joseph Uhelski, III**, transportation engineer 8, Design, Bay City TSC, Bay Region

**Denise Wenk**, secretary 8, Construction, Taylor TSC, Metro Region

**Anna Wood**, general office assistant 6, Administration, Southwest Region

### Promotions

**Susan Gorski**, transportation planner manager 14, Statewide Planning, Lansing (August promotion)

#### October

**Stephen Benko**, bridge worker 8, Mackinac Bridge

**Jeremy Bourdon**, transportation engineer licensed specialist, Maintenance, Bay Region

**Theresa Brockway**, transportation maintenance coordinator 12, Maintenance Administration, North Region

**Gregg Brunner**, transportation engineer licensed specialist 13, Design, Bay City TSC, Bay Region

**Paul Cristini**, construction technician 12, Construction, University Region

**Arthur Green**, licensed engineer manager 14, Grand Rapids TSC, Grand Region

**Susan Heath**, department technician 7, Real Estate, Lansing

**Kimberly Henderson**, department manager 12, Technological Services, Lansing

**Cheryl Hill**, department technician 7, Contract Services, Lansing

**Sheryl Holcomb**, department analyst 12, Executive

**Brenda Kafer**, transportation maintenance worker 9, Adrian Garage, University Region



**George Keson**, construction technician 11, Construction, Cadillac TSC, North Region

**Perry Lund**, transportation maintenance supervisor 12, Bay City TSC, Bay Region

**Susan Mortel**, senior management executive 19, Executive, Lansing

**Steven Neumann**, land surveyor 13, Design, Superior Region

**Gerard Pawloski**, engineer manager licensed 14, Delivery, Oakland TSC, Metro Region

**Martin Rajala**, construction technician 11, Construction, Ishpeming TSC, Superior Region

**Paul Sander**, property manager 14, Project Development, Real Estate, Metro Region

**Pamela Sebenick**, executive secretary 10, Real Estate, Administration, Lansing

**Robert Tervo**, engineer manager licensed 13, Development, Superior Region

**Willard Thompson**, state deputy division administrator 15, University Region

**Brian Ullman**, transportation engineer 12, Maintenance, Bay City TSC, Bay Region

**Portia (Smith) Van Pelt**, accounting technician, Projects & Receipts, Financial Operations

**Kimberly Zimmer-Janezko**, transportation engineer licensed specialist 13, Design, Davison TSC, Bay Region

## November

**Michael Borowski**, drafting technician 11, Real Estate, Bay Region

**Phillip Clapp**, construction technician 9, Delivery, Southwest Region

**Paula Corlett**, engineer manager licensed 14, Traffic & Safety, Lansing

**Denoris Everett**, engineer manager licensed 14, Delivery, Macomb TSC, Metro Region

**Peter Funkhouser**, transportation engineer 12, Utilities, Design, Lansing

**Mark Gainer**, construction technician 11, Construction, Grayling TSC, North Region

**Mark Grazioli**, engineer manager licensed 15, Construction, M&T, Metro Region

**Ernest Grossman**, transportation maintenance supervisor 12, Mt. Pleasant TSC, Bay Region

**Aaron Hengesbach**, construction technician 8, Lansing TSC, University Region

**Leanne Hengesbach**, department analyst 9, Aviation Services

**Donna Hoofman**, transportation engineer 12, Development, Grand Region

**Jose Lopez**, transportation maintenance worker 9, Adrian Garage, University Region

**Edward Martin**, transportation maintenance worker 9, Coloma TSC, Southwest Region

**Douglas Noble**, transportation maintenance coordinator 12, Escanaba TSC, Superior Region

**Mary Pizzo**, general office assistant 5, Real Estate, Lansing

**Sonja Scheurer**, administrative manager 15, Administrative Services, Executive, Lansing

**Scott Singer**, licensed transportation engineer specialist 13, Port Huron TSC, Metro Region

**William Tansil**, state division administrator 17, Asset Management Division

**Candice Taylor**, general office assistant 8, Maintenance, A&E, University Region

**Kurt Zolnierak**, transportation maintenance worker 9, Grand Ledge Garage, University Region

**Thomas Zurburg**, engineer technician 8, Construction & Technology

## December

**Jan Beebe**, transportation maintenance worker 9, Kalkaska Garage, North Region

**Mark Bott**, engineer manager licensed 15, Traffic & Safety, Lansing

**William Hall**, construction technician 11, Delivery, Detroit TSC, Metro Region

**Charles Heidt**, transportation maintenance worker 9, Newberry TSC, Superior Region

**Karen Patrick-Newton**, secretary 9, Administration, Taylor TSC, Metro Region

**Jessica Pierce**, word processing assistant 6, Economic Development & Enhancement, Lansing

**Gorette Yung**, transportation engineer licensed specialist 13, Development, Oakland TSC, Metro Region

## Appointments

**Bob Bender**, of Middleville, has been appointed to the State Transportation Commission and named chairman. He is a former state representative and a retired bovine tuberculosis eradication coordinator. He replaces Bart LaBelle, of Mt. Pleasant, whose term expired. Bender is appointed to represent the general public for a term expiring December 2005.

**Ted Wahby**, of St. Clair Shores, has been reappointed to the State Transportation Commission. He is the Macomb County treasurer. He will represent the general public for a term expiring Dec. 21, 2005.

## Births/Adoptions

**Stacey Gough**, Oakland TSC project engineer, and her husband, William, are the proud parents of Gabriel William who was born Nov. 22. He is welcomed by his big brother, Kyle, who is two.

## Deaths

**John Koivisto**, 50, lost his battle with heart disease on Oct. 26, 2002, in Ann Arbor with his family at his side. He is survived by his wife of 21 years, Alice; daughters, Julie and Jenny; father, Matt; and twin brother, Karl, who is MDOT's Howard City TSC manager. John was a civil engineer employed by MDOT for 27 years. He worked in the Design unit of the Escanaba TSC. He was very close to his family and especially proud of his daughters' accomplishments in music and sports. John loved the outdoors, including fishing, hunting and swimming. In honor of John, the family would appreciate your consideration to sign up to become an organ donor.

**Gary Anthony**, 50, passed away suddenly on Dec. 29, 2002, in Wahalla. Gary is survived by his wife of 29 years, Virginia (Ginny); two sons, a daughter; one brother and one sister; and his parents. Gary worked his entire 16 years at MDOT in the North Region, the majority at the Traverse City TSC and, most recently, at the Cadillac TSC. He was recognized last year for his development of a density kit in February 2002, and received a Bright Idea award for his special effort. Gary enjoyed woodworking, fishing and hunting.

**Terry Gotts**, 57, died Feb. 14 in Mason. Terry enjoyed a 31-year career at MDOT, serving as the division administrator of the Intermodal Policy Division in the Bureau of Transportation Planning. Terry's training was in higher mathematics, and he began his career in highway research before turning his talents to transportation policy and finance. Terry was nationally known as a leader in transportation policy and was widely respected by his peers. He served on a number of national and state level committees on issues pertaining to funding and legislative issues. He was instrumental in helping Michigan acquire \$310 million in additional funding annually for Michigan's roads and bridges. In 1996, Terry received MDOT's prestigious Director's Award for outstanding achievement. His vast wealth of knowledge and positive attitude are characteristics his employees and colleagues will miss. He is survived by his wife of 31 years, Lillian. 🐾



John Koivisto



Terry Gotts



Gary Anthony

COURTESY OF FAMILY



**Roberta Tisdale**

## OHR's New Look

Much has changed in the Office of Human Resources in the past year:

- new faces in new places
- renovations provide improved offices
- faster application processing time
- more services and information available on-line for employees through HRMN Self-Serve

### New & Improved Application Process

Applying for jobs at MDOT has changed during the past year, and for some very good reasons. For one, the labor market keeps providing more and more applicants which basically means OHR has a lot more customers. For another, the last four months of 2002, when compared to 2001, reveal a 175 percent increase in the number of jobs filled at MDOT. Our new and improved application process helps us fill vacancies more quickly. The new process allows job applicants to view all posted jobs online, access an online employment application, and permits applicants to forward their completed applications both by mail and fax.

### Change Is in the Air

To apply for a department job vacancy, an MDOT application is now required. Although resumes are encouraged, they are not a substitute for the application. In order to be considered, it is critical to submit a complete application by the posted deadline. Incomplete applications, resumes without an application, or applications received after the posted deadline, are no longer accepted.

All applications for MDOT vacancies must be received in OHR by noon on the day the job posting closes. This change in deadline allows us to get applications to the personnel liaisons more quickly.

An employee who currently works in a position that requires a degree no longer needs to submit a transcript when applying for another position that requires a degree.

### Employee Self-Service

During the past year, employees have gained more access to their personnel information through HRMN Self-Service (SSA). Through this Web access employees now can perform the following functions:

- print out beneficiary forms
- change insurance companies (during open enrollment only)
- view current benefit coverage options
- view employment and pay data
- increase/decrease insurance coverage due to life events (birth, marriage, adoption, etc.)
- sign up for direct deposit (up to three accounts)
- view and print information from the last pay statement
- sign up for State Employees Combined Campaign (SECC) deductions
- view year-to-date information
- maintain emergency contact list information
- view leave balances

Additional features are available for employees who serve as supervisors or managers.

Passwords will be mailed to all employees. 📧

## OHR Objectives

*Provide excellent HR programs and services*

*Improve communication*

*Improve OHR's management information*

*Facilitate learning for personnel liaisons and supervisors*

## OHR Staff

### Compensation and Benefits Section

**Wardell (Sunny) Watson**, manager

**Mary Withers**, pay for performance and audit analyst

**Cheryl Ward**, DCDS and MIDB technician; OHR, Commission Audits

**Carol Benner**, personnel assistant for Construction & Technology, Maintenance, Grand and Superior regions, Traffic & Safety

**Mary Kitzman**, personnel assistant for Executive, Highway Operations, International Bridge, Metro Region, Transportation Planning

**Amy Kramp**, personnel assistant for Bay and Southwest regions

**Shelly Rathbun**, personnel assistant for Multi Modal, Finance, North Region

**Michelle Sedell**, temporary support

**Joni Grimes**, student assistant

**Anthony Carter**, limited term personnel assistant for Attorney General, Communications, Design, Real Estate, University Region

### Staffing Support Area

**Joetta Swain Parker**, manager

**Ruth Eaton**, personnel assistant

**Tammy Mans**, personnel analyst

**Lisa Price**, personnel analyst for Finance and Administration, Attorney General, Communications, OHR, Bay and North regions

**Joe Villarreal**, personnel analyst for Highway Operations, University, Southwest and Superior regions, International and Mackinac bridges

**Kim Wood**, personnel analyst for Commission Audits, Multi Modal, Delivery, Metro Region

**Jeremy Miller**, student assistant

**Toni Mikelonis**, temporary support

**Heather Pung**, student assistant

### Employee Services Section

**Rosemary Ferguson**, manager

**Dennis Armistead**, labor relations representative for Bay, Southwest and University regions

**Karee Briner**, leave of absences technician

**LuAnn Cannell**, Workers' Compensation specialist

**Mike Gailey**, labor relations representative for Lansing, Superior Region, International Bridge

**Cindy Hiner**, secretary

**Crystal Ley**, drug and alcohol testing program assistant

**Pam Verplanck**, word processing assistant

**Todd White**, labor relations representative for Grand, Metro and North regions, Mackinac Bridge

### Administration

**Roberta Tisdale**, administrator

**Mary Jane Bornemann**, executive secretary

**Kirsten Cole**, receptionist

**Linda Feldpausch**, receptionist

**Gerry Gould**, human resources developer

**Joetta Parker**, EEO coordinator

**Kristen Bornemann**, student assistant

*Look for a photo of our updated OHR staff in the Spring issue of MDOT Today.*

Roberta Tisdale is the Office of Human Resources administrator. To reach her, call 517-373-1680 or e-mail [tisdaler@michigan.gov](mailto:tisdaler@michigan.gov). Visit the OHR site on the intranet at <http://interchange/ohr>.



# Title VI Prohibits Discrimination in Federally Assisted Programs

"Simple justice requires that public funds, to which all taxpayers of all races contribute, not be spent in any fashion which encourages, entrenches, subsidizes or results in racial discrimination."

— President John F. Kennedy (1963)

## What Is Title VI?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ensures that "no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Although the department has projects that are not federally funded, the 1987 Civil Rights Restoration Act restored the broad coverage of "program or activity" to include all activities conducted throughout MDOT. Therefore, the entire department is required to comply with Title VI, not just programs receiving federal assistance.

## How Does Title VI Apply to MDOT?

Verna Miller, Bureau of Finance and Administration, is MDOT's Title VI specialist. Verna's duties are defined by the Code of Federal Regulations which require the monitoring of all MDOT processes for Title VI compliance. "In order to receive federal funds, the department must conduct all activities in a nondiscriminatory manner and document those efforts,"

said Verna. To ensure Title VI compliance, it is critical that people involved in planning, construction, real estate, design and maintenance processes conduct business in a manner that encourages the involvement of those members of the public affected by their decisions. Discrimination could result from procedures and processes that might inadvertently exclude a certain group, or provide a disproportionate benefit to one group over another.

## Title VI Interdisciplinary Team

The MDOT Title VI Interdisciplinary Team is comprised of coordinators assigned from all MDOT regions and major program areas, including one from FHWA, who work with the Title VI specialist in addressing compliance issues related to their respective areas. The team's mission is to prevent discrimination by raising awareness of Title VI objectives and responsibilities within MDOT – and among those affected by our decisions – through education and outreach. The team also is involved in establishing procedures to ensure that individuals are given an opportunity for full participation in MDOT programs and activities. Title VI training is being developed and will be available to employees beginning April 2003.

"Title VI issues are very important in the Metro Region because of the large population and ethnic diversity of the area," said Jeff Edwards, a transportation planner and region Title VI coordinator. Jeff makes certain that everyone in the region is aware of Title VI issues and regulations, and that brochures and information are available at all public meetings. He also developed a reporting form for collecting data from region offices and personnel, regarding Title VI complaints or public meeting issues.

"In the North Region, ensuring that Title VI compliance occurs is challenging because of the largely rural population," stated Patricia Johnson, North Region special projects engineer and region Title VI coordinator. Her role is to raise awareness within the region as to the importance of Title VI compliance and to ensure that both region and TSC staff have the tools and skills to ensure that decisions do not inadvertently discriminate against any particular population.

For more information, visit the MDOT intranet at <http://interchange/teams/titleVI/>. 🐼

Read All About It!  
In the spring edition  
of MDOT Today:

2003 MDOT Leadership  
Conference Highlights



A Salute to  
our MDOT  
Family in  
the Military



If you have immediate family serving in the active military – or you are serving in the reserves – please send the following information by April 15 to [MDOTToday@michigan.gov](mailto:MDOTToday@michigan.gov) or call 517-373-2160. We need: your name, your MDOT work unit and location...plus the military person's name, rank, branch of service, duty station, military specialty and their relationship to MDOT staff.

WORTH repeating

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act but a habit.”

— Aristotle



Verna Miller  
MDOT Title VI Specialist

# I-94 Whiteout Challenges Southwest Region

The 72-vehicle pileup that occurred Feb. 7 on I-94 took place just one-quarter mile from the Coloma TSC. Following the 1:30 p.m. accident, 24 Coloma Garage employees worked until nearly midnight when the freeway finally reopened.

Maintenance Supervisor Mike Freeman from the Coloma Garage found himself in a sudden whiteout and without warning became the 20th car in the pileup. His westbound truck was hit from behind, spun around completely, and crossed the median into oncoming east-bound traffic. He was headed toward an oncoming semi when his truck suddenly turned. A succession of crashes followed throughout the next five minutes.

Miraculously, Mike walked away with only minor injuries, there was just one death, and hazardous chemicals were

not involved. It could have been much worse on this road that averages 70,000 vehicles per day.

Special thanks for going above and beyond the call of duty go to Coloma TSC Manager Paul South; employees of the Coloma Maintenance Garage including Mike Freeman, LuEllen Brown and John Rader; Kalamazoo Special Crews employee Jim Roland; MDOT Safety Administrator Eileen Phifer; Region Communications Representative Julie Martin and staff members

from all the area garages who pitched in wherever they could. Teamwork among MDOT staff, medical and emergency personnel, police and the Indiana DOT helped handle the critical situation. 🙌



COURTESY OF HERALD PALLADIUM

A sudden whiteout on I-94 near I-196 caused a 72-vehicle pileup.

The 20th car in the pileup was driven by Coloma Garage Maintenance Supervisor Mike Freeman.



**Editors:** Janet W. Foran  
Joan H. Justema

**Graphic Design:** Kris Hart  
Graphics Unit

**All photos in MDOT TODAY are courtesy of MDOT Photo Lab unless otherwise noted.**

**MDOT Photo Lab staff:**  
Tim Burke, Jim LeMay and Bill Phillips

**MDOT is improving Michigan's total transportation system by efficiently delivering transportation products, services and information.**

**MDOT TODAY is published quarterly for the employees and retirees of MDOT. We encourage you to recycle old issues.**

**Please send any questions or comments to: MDOT TODAY, Office of Communications, P.O. Box 30050, Lansing, MI 48909; Telephone 517-373-2160.**

**E-mail: mdottoday@michigan.gov**

6,000 copies printed at \$0.27 each  
for a total of \$1,620

PRESORTED STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
LANSING MI  
PERMIT NO. 1200



Visit MDOT's Web site for an electronic version of this issue or previous issues of MDOT Today. They are located under Maps & Publications at: [www.michigan.gov/mdot](http://www.michigan.gov/mdot). If you need this information in an alternative format, contact: MDOT, Office of Communications, P.O. Box 30050, Lansing, MI 48909-9791. Telephone 517-373-2160.